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RR RUEHWEB

DE RUEHGT #0003 0081608
ZNR UUUUU ZZH
R 081608Z JAN 10
FM AMEMBASSY GUATEMALA
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC 0701
INFO RUEHGT/AMEMBASSY GUATEMALA

UNCLAS GUATEMALA 000003

SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [ETTC](#) [KOMC](#) [GT](#)

SUBJECT: Guatemala Response: Blue Lantern Level 3 Post-Shipment
End-Use Check on License GC-189609

REF: STATE 120755

1. (SBU) Summary: In response to reftel, EmbOffs researched the bona fides of the arms import company Gun Depot. The research included an on-site inspection of Gun Depot, an interview with the company's owner, and records checks of both the company and the owner with the MOD's General Directorate for the Control of Firearms and Ammunition (DIGECAM). As a result of the investigation, Post concluded that Gun Depot does not have a history of purchasing U.S.-origin re-exported weapons. End Summary.

2. (SBU) Gun Depot has been in operation in Zone 10 near the U.S. embassy for 15 years. The store is owned by Ricardo Umana Luna, the son of a former Guatemalan Supreme Court President, and in addition to weapons, the family manages an active but small sugar plantation in Escuintla, two hours south of the city. The store (inside an older commercial shopping area) itself is old, outdated and not conducive to high-traffic pedestrian activity. Umana stated that he began the business as a hobby; a former sports gun amateur, he turned his hobby into a business. Umana maintains a normal weapons inventory including rifles, shotguns and pistols, but Umana prefers company clients like security firms to individuals. Per reftel, Umana confirmed to EmbOffs that all his clients and distributors are local and he does not usually perform any regional transactions (with the exception of the one-time (reftel) purchase through a third-party intermediary with Centrum S.A. of El Salvador).

3. (SBU) Umana stated that his annual sales of U.S.-origin firearms are about \$200,000 per year, but did not elaborate on who his customers were for these firearms.

4. (SBU) Umana explained to EmbOffs that the purchase of 80 Smith & Wesson Model 10 Revolvers, .38 caliber began through a third party intermediary named Jose Gomez. According to Umana, Gomez visited Gun Depot for a two-year period talking to Umana about this deal and how he could not afford to miss this opportunity since they were "old revolvers at a good price". After many conversations with Gomez, he agreed to the deal, but Umana stated that he does not have a relationship with Centrum S.A., Armeria Magnum or Salvador Luna of Nicaragua. Umana explained that Gomez knew a man named Captain Mario Uceda from El Salvador and that is why Gomez was able to offer these weapons to him. According to EmbOff industry resources, Uceda has no affiliation to Centrum S.A. and Gomez is a Guatemalan gunsmith who has strong connections to contacts in El Salvador like Centrum S.A. After Umana received the reftel weapons in November 2007, he placed them in one of his two weapons vaults in his office at Gun Depot. And in June 2008, Gun Depot was robbed and the only weapons taken were the revolvers, according to Umana. (Comment: DIGECAM contacts confirmed with EmbOffs that a robbery occurred in June 2008, where 657 arms were stolen at that time. End Comment).

5. (SBU) Per reftel, Umana stated that he is not familiar with the regulations governing the import of U.S.-origin defense articles, including restrictions on unauthorized re-transfer or re-export.

6. (SBU) Gun Depot has a satisfactory record with DIGECAM and has

passed all routine inspections without incident. According to DIGECAM, Gun Depot is a small-scale but well managed weapons store that is operating within local laws and regulations.

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